

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 BANGKO 03478 01 OF 02 011246Z

50

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-20 OMB-01 DEAE-00 IO-14 NIC-01 EB-11

CU-04 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00

NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20 USIA-15

SAM-01 DRC-01 /145 W

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R 011003Z MAR 74

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1103

INFO AMEMBASSY SAIGON

AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 BANGKOK 3478

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, TH

SUBJ: UNION FOR CIVIL LIBERTY JOINS IN ATTACK ON COUNTER-
INSURGENCY POLICY

REF: BANGKOK 3035

SUMMARY: THAI INTELLECTUALS HAVE FORMED YET ANOTHER
POLITICAL PRESSURE GROUP: THE UNION FOR CIVIL LIBERTY (THAILAND).
A MAJOR PURPOSE OF THE UNION IS TO "GIVE SUPPORT TO THE
STRUGGLE AND COLLECTIVE ALTRUISM OF THAI STUDENTS AND CITIZENS
WHO FIRMLY STOOD FOR THE VALUE OF BASIC HUMAN RIGHTS AND
WERE AGAINST THE IMMORAL POLITICAL POWER IN THE COUNTRY." THE
"BANGKOK POST" REPORTED 25 FEBRUARY THAT THE UNION HAD COME
FORWARD WITH "AN OPEN LETTER TO PRIME MINISTER SANYA
THAMMASAK ASKING THE GOVERNMENT TO ADMIT THAT ITS SUPPRESSION
POLICY AGAINST TERRORISTS, INITIATED BY THE FORMER GOVERN-
MENT, IS WRONG, CONTRARY TO THE AIMS OF PEACE AND MORALE
SHATTERING FOR THE PEOPLE." END SUMMARY.

1. THE UNION FOR CIVL LIBERTY (UCL) IS AN ORGANIZATION

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PAGE 02 BANGKO 03478 01 OF 02 011246Z

MADE UP PRIMARILY OF LAWYERS AND PROFESSORS. IT WAS

FOUNDED 24 NOVEMBER 1973 WITH DR. SANEH CHAMARIK, PROFESSOR OF POLITICAL SCIENCE AT THAMMASAT UNIVERSITY, AS ITS CHAIRMAN. DR. SANEH IS WIDELY REGARDED AS ONE OF THAILAND'S MOST ARTICULATE AND KNOWLEDGEABLE PROFESSORS OF POLITICAL SCIENCE.

2. THE UCL DOES NOT INTEND TO BE A POLITICAL PARTY. THE CONSTITUTION FOR THE UNION STATES ITS RULES AND GOALS AS FOLLOWS:

RULES:

A. MEMBERS COME TOGETHER OF THEIR OWN FREE WILL AS THAI CITIZENS. MEMBERSHIP IS OPEN TO ALL.

B. THE UNION IS AN INDEPENDENT CIVIL ORGANIZATION.

C. THE UNION HAS NO STATUS AS REPRESENTATIVE OF ANY PARTICULAR GROUP OR INTEREST, BUT SERVES TO PROTECT THE RIGHTS OF THE PEOPLE.

D. THE UNION IS NON-POLITICAL, THAT IS, IT WILL NOT BE A TOOL FOR SEEKING OF POWER NOR WILL IT SUPPORT ANY PARTICULAR GROUP OR INTEREST.

GOALS:

A. STUDY AND PUBLICIZE ITS FINDINGS ON HUMAN RIGHTS WITHIN A DEMOCRATIC SYSTEM.

B. PROVIDE SERVICES TO THE PUBLIC IN ORDER TO PROTECT HUMAN RIGHTS.

C. COOPERATE AND COORDINATE WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS HAVING SIMILAR GOALS.

D. SUPPORT AND MOBILIZE PEOPLE IN DIFFERENT PARTS OF THE COUNTRY IN THE MATTER OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND INITIATE ACTIVITIES AT DIFFERENT LOCALITIES.

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PAGE 03 BANGKO 03478 01 OF 02 011246Z

E. FIND WAYS AND MEANS AND UTILIZE THEM TO SAFEGUARD HUMAN RIGHTS.

COMMENT: DURING A LUNCHEON ENGAGEMENT 28 JANUARY 1974 PRUDHISAN JUMBALA, ONE OF THE COMMITTEE MEMBERS OF THE UCL, TOLD AN EMBASSY OFFICER THAT THE UNION FACED ITS GREATEST THREAT TODAY IN THE PERSON OF DR. PUEY UNGPHAKORN. PRUDHISAN SAID ABOUT PUEY: "HE WANTS TO BECOME A MEMBER OF OUR

ORGANIZATION. BUT IF HE DOES WE ARE FINISHED. PEOPLE WILL IDENTIFY US AS A POLITICAL PARTY. IT WILL NOT MATTER EVEN IF DR. PUEY IS HONEST IN HIS INTENTION TO SERVE THE GOALS AND TO HELP THE UNION WORK AS IT IS INTENDED TO. NOBODY WILL BELIEVE IT. WE WILL NO LONGER BE CREDIBLE AS POLITICALLY NEUTRAL."

3. THE FIRST ISSUE IN WHICH THE UCL BECAME INVOLVED WAS THE CONTROVERSY OVER THE NONG NGU HAO INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT PROJECT. DR. SANEH, ACCORDING TO PRUDHISAN JUMBALA, WAS THE ONE WHO SUGGESTED TO SAEKSAN PRASERTKUL, FORMER SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE FEDERATION OF INDEPENDENT STUDENTS, THAT HE JOIN FORCES WITH THE NATIONAL STUDENT CENTER OF THAILAND TO FORCE GOVERNMENT RECONSIDERATION OF THE PROJECT TO BUILD AN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT AT NONG NGU HAO. THE UCL THEN HELPED "PREPARE THE FLOOR" AND CERTAIN PANEL MEMBERS FOR THE SEMINAR ON NONG NGU HAO HELD 6 JANUARY 1974. AT THAT SEMINAR THE GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS DEFENDING THE PROJECT WERE, AS "THE NATION" PUT IT THE FOLLOWING DAY, "BUTCHERED".

4. NOW SANEH APPEARS TO HAVE TAKEN THE OPPORTUNITY PRESENTED BY THE BAN NA SAI INCIDENT (REFTEL) TO CALL FOR A REVISION OF THE GOVERNMENT COMMUNIST SUPPRESSION POLICY. SANEH CITED THE BAN NA SAI INCIDENT, AND SUGGESTED THAT THE POINT IS NOT WHICH PARTY IS GUILTY, BUT THAT THE PRESENT SUPPRESSION POLICY IS WRONG AND THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD REVISE IT IMMEDIATELY.

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PAGE 01 BANGKO 03478 02 OF 02 011331Z

43

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 BANGKOK 3478

5. COMMENT: IN THIS REGARD, IT IS IMPORTANT TO NOTE THAT THE SECOND VICE CHAIRMAN OF THE UCL IS POLICE MAJ. ANAND SENAKHAN. MAJ. ANAND WAS THE PRIME MOVER BEHIND A RECENT BEST SELLING BOOK ENTITLED "COMMUNIST DARLING" THAT IS CRITICAL OF CSOC AND THE GOVERNMENT'S SUPPRESSION EFFORT. THE BOOK CHARGES THAT THE GOVERNMENT'S POLICY OF ENCOURAGING THE PUBLIC TO ARM AND FIGHT SHOULDER TO SHOULDER WITH GOVERNMENT TROOPS AGAINST COMMUNIST TERRORISTS IS DIVIDING THE PEOPLE. THE BOOK SUGGESTS THAT THE BEST METHOD OF FIGHTING COMMUNIST TERRORISTS IS TO GET RID OF BAD OFFICIALS AND IMPROVE THE ADMINISTRATIVE SYSTEM. MAJ. ANAND, THREE OTHER POLICE OFFICERS, AND TWO ARMY COLONELS WHO CONTRIBUTED ARTICLES TO THE BOOK HAVE BEEN TRANSFERRED FROM CSOC AND ARE NOW UNDER INVESTIGATION FOR POSSIBLE LEAKING OF OFFICIAL SECRETS. ANAND, ACCORDING TO "THE NATION" ON 28 JANUARY 1974 SAID THAT HE IS PREPARED TO FACE THE CONSEQUENCES OF HIS ACTION. HE FELT THE PUBLIC HAD TO BE TOLD THAT THE CSOC POLICY OF ARMED SUPPRESSION GIVES PREFERENCE TO FORCE OVER POLITICS AND PSYCHOLOGICAL WARFARE. COMMUNISM, IN ANAND'S VIEW, IS NOT A FORMIDABLE ENEMY FOR THE COUNTRY TO CONQUER IF IT IS WILLING TO CLEAN ITS OWN HOUSE FIRST. ANAND, WE ASSUME, IS CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 02 BANGKO 03478 02 OF 02 011331Z

THE DRIVING FORCE BEHIND THE UCL CALL FOR A REVISION OF RTG CI POLICY. END COMMENT.

6. THE "BANGKOK POST", AS WELL AS "THE NATION", REPORTED 28 FEBRUARY THAT THERE IS TO BE A CHANGE IN COUNTERINSURGENCY POLICY AND PRACTICE WITH MORE STRESS ON POLITICS AND LESS ON SUPPRESSION. BEYOND THE STATEMENT THAT LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND BETTER HEALTH AND EDUCATION WOULD BE PROMOTED, NO SUBSTANTIAL INFORMATION ON THE NATURE OF THE CI POLITICAL PROGRAM WAS PROVIDED. WE MAY EXPECT TO HEAR MORE FROM THE UCL WHEN IT HAS SOMETHING MORE ITSELF TO COMMENT ON.

7. THE UCL MIGHT BE CLASSIFIED FROM A THAI FRAME OF REFERENCE AS SOMEWHAT LEFT OF CENTER IN ITS VIEWS. IT IS TOO EARLY TO TELL, HOWEVER, WHETHER IT CAN BE "POLITICALLY NEUTRAL" AS IT CLAIMS IT INTENDS TO BE. ITS MEMBERS APPEAR TO COME FROM THE MORE POLITICALLY MATURE SECTION OF THAI ACADEMIA. THEY ARE MORE AWARE OF THE NEED FOR

DOING THEIR HOMEWORK ON ISSUES AND "PREPARING THE FLOOR"
FOR ACTION. THE UCL WILL PROBABLY AVOID SENSATIONALISM
AND ORGANIZATION OF PUBLIC RALLIES FOR IMPACT. OF ALL
THE NEW PRESSURE GROUPS, IT IS ONE OF THE MOST LIKELY TO
SURVIVE OVER THE LONG HAUL.
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